

**SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES  
2013  
MOTOR MILL FOUNDATION OF  
CLAYTON COUNTY**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>JOHN NIKOLAI -</b>	<b>CHAIR</b>
<b>JON DENEUI -</b>	<b>VICE CHAIR</b>
<b>LARRY STONE -</b>	<b>SECRETARY</b>
<b>CHUCK MORINE-</b>	<b>TREASURER</b>
<b>LES KLINK</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>JEANETTE MULLER</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>TOM GIFFORD</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>LEE LENTH</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>BETTY BUCHHOLZ</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>ELLEN COLLINS</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>

# Table of Contents

Mission Statement	3
Foundation Business	3
Planning	5
Facilities	5
Grounds	6
Communications	7
Education	7
Finance	10

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Motor Mill Foundation strives to protect and preserve the architectural integrity, history, natural beauty, and serenity of the Motor Mill site and its surroundings, and to develop appropriate uses and interpretations as a regional treasure for the benefit of current and future generations*

## **FOUNDATION BUSINESS**

### **Elections**

Nikolai and deNeui were reelected to 3-year terms to the board of directors. The current officers were re-elected which includes Nikolai, chair; deNeui, vice-chair; Stone, secretary; Morine treasurer.

### **Volunteer Hours**

Volunteer hours are annually tracked to record number of volunteers and number of hours worked each year. This information can be used to help show the local support for grants. It also reflects the amount of time a dedicated group of individuals spend to help off-set labor costs for the restoration efforts being made at the site. In 2013, 24 volunteers donated 987.5 hours working at the mill or conducting Motor Mill business throughout the year.

### **Board members**

The search continues for more board members, tour guides, construction volunteers and Friends of Motor Mill. Several people have been contacted throughout the year with some following up. With the publicity of the bridge, the tour guides were very busy this year and continued recruitment is vital in order to continue having the mill open for tours.

The board was informed that Gordy Callison passed away in May 2013. Callison drew the “bird’s-eye-view historical re-creation” images of Motor in the 1870’s.

### **Iowa Museum Association**

The Motor Mill Foundation renewed their membership in the Iowa Museum Association for \$75.

### **Silos & Smokestacks**

Engelhardt, Harkrader, Nikolai, Stone, deNeui, and Collins attended the Silos and Smokestacks award luncheon on April 3 in Waterloo. The Foundation received the “People’s Choice Site of the Year” award and the “Outstanding Protection in Agriculture” award. The “People’s Choice Site of the Year” Award was received through an on-line voting system. Members were urged to help spread the word to potential voters. Several organizations and individuals put the word out on many lists to recruit votes. The “Outstanding Protection in Agriculture” award was voted on by the Silos Board of Directors.

### **NRHP Application**

Historian Marlys Svendsen has submitted the NRHP document to register the new site boundaries. The document has been reviewed by several members of the Motor Mill Foundation and by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). SHPO reported that the new bridge is such a faithful reconstruction of the 1899 superstructure that it should be considered a contributing resource in the Motor Mill historic district.

The document will be reviewed by the Clayton County Preservation Commission and then moved to the federal level and reviewed by them in February. This project is part of the mitigation project of the white house removal after the 2008 flood event.

### **Turkey River Recreational Corridor/Iowa Great Places**

The Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC) is a 28E agreement between the Cities of Clermont, Elgin, Elkader and Motor Mill along with Fayette and Clayton Counties. The effort is to develop Land and Water Trails along the Turkey River connecting the four cities and the two counties. The effort is part of an Iowa Great Places Grant.

Ellen Collins was the Motor Mill Foundation representative on the TRRC. Collins resigned after serving three years in that position. Jon deNeui is the current representative.

Robin Bostrom is the coordinator for TRRC. The funding for the position is paid through a cooperative agreement between the partners. The TRRC website is located at [www.turkeyrivercorridor.com](http://www.turkeyrivercorridor.com).

The Safari Project was sponsored by TRRC this past summer again. Clayton and Fayette Counties each will again host a “Safari” for young people to visit 10 scenic/historic sites during the summer. Maps will be available in libraries. Clayton County sites are: Motor, Elkport, Elkader trail head, Ten-Mile Bridge, the Courthouse, Pony Hollow Trail, Osborne Pond, Founders Park butterfly garden, Table Rock, and the Garber canoe landing. The program went from Memorial Day to October 1<sup>st</sup>.

TRRC sponsored the Turkey Float at the Motor Mill Gala. We had good participation in the event. Other events included “Paddle-Pedal-Putt” biking, canoeing, golfing triathlon on August 4. A golf tournament was held at the Elkader and Valley courses on September 28 and 29.

TRRC is developing a standardized sign. It is a triangle with the local entity logo on top and the TRRC logo on the bottom to be placed at the TRRC sites.

TRRC received the Volunteer of the Year award from the Clayton County Development Group.

Clermont worked on and completed their trail project as part of the Great Places grant. They also received additional funding for portions of the project and developed a signage system through the city of Clermont.

Elgin this year finalized their streetscape plan and completed the project which included a trail link through town. The Elgin businesses have seen more traffic as they try to blend with the trail.

Elkader has completed the whitewater course on the Turkey River. The landscaping along the bank will be completed in the spring. Several other projects continue in the Founders Park area.

Roger Buchholz received a Governor’s Volunteer Award for his work at Elkader’s Founders Park.

The Clayton County Conservation Board and the Motor Mill Foundation held the Motor Mill Gala on May 4. This was a celebration of the partners involved in the construction of the bridge. The Klink

family made a family reunion of the weekend. Toward the end of the year the conservation board was able to have the preliminary design completed on the Motor Mill Trail.

## **PLANNING**

### **Long Range Visioning Plan**

The board discussed and revised a number of items on the Vision Plan. Some changes to the immediate needs included: installation of signs for the new bridge; continuing oral history interviews; clarify land ownership south of the river; and better security.

The water trail has been completed, so that was removed from intermediate needs. The board agreed that Long-term needs should include more demonstrations and hands-on educational activities.

The board discussed ways to capitalize on the selection of Jessica Rilling's photo of Motor Mill as the cover of the Iowa Travel Guide. Stone agreed to contact Rilling to request permission to use the photo. (Note: Permission has been granted.)

Nikolai suggested imprinting the image on T-shirts to be used by tour guides at the Mill. Collins agreed to look into the options. Collins also will check on ways to get a large banner or poster of the Travel Guide image for use on a float in parades, at the Mill, or other displays.

### **Business Plan**

It has been determined that the Motor Mill Foundation needs to develop a business plan which would help us approach larger foundations or corporations for major donations. Darla Kelchen at the Clayton County Development Group has offered to help.

The business plan is currently being worked on. Through this process the foundation has also decided to pursue improving the interpretive programs as well.

### **Interpretive Plan**

The board reviewed the Interpreting Vision report prepared in 2010 by Tom Woods. Suggestions for displays include as-built drawings, ice cutting demonstration, transportation, and grains. Help with this process is available through Dave Metz and Angi Reid with Silos and Smokestacks. The Foundation is also researching how to put an "app" on a sign to allow smart phone users to access interpretive information.

## **FACILITIES**

### **Bridge**

The Motor Mill Bridge received a lot of attention from visitors this past year. Additional signage has been added along Hwy 13 and Grandview Road and at Grandview and Hazel Roads. This past summer, local businessman, Mark Collins designed, constructed and helped install a Motor Mill sign at the intersection of Hazel and Galaxy Road.

As part of the bridge project through FEMA, FEMA required a bronze plaque be placed near the bridge with the bridge name, dates and the contractor. The foundation has looked at better ways to secure the sign since it was installed.

After the final payments for the construction of the bridge, it has been noted that the foundation owes roughly \$70,000 to the Conservation Board's Conservation Reserve Fund. The foundation has raised roughly \$40,000 for the capital fund for the bridge.

As a result, the foundation has discussed a 3-year plan for the foundation to repay the County Conservation Board for the bridge construction. The plan is important so the foundation can move on to other projects during this time as well. Currently funds are mostly going back into paying the conservation reserve fund. It is felt that the locals are tapped out, discussion has centered to target big corporate sponsors such as flour and grain companies like Pillsbury, Quaker, and General Mills etc.

The board discussed where to put the "Mill Open for Tours" sign, now that the new bridge is open. The consensus seemed to be that, at minimum, we continue to put out the sign at Highway 13 and Grape Road on the east side of Elkader, and that we have a new sign for Hazel and Grandview at Communia.

### **Motor Mill Trail**

Late in the fall of 2013 permission was granted from the landowners to complete the preliminary survey work of the trail route. That has been completed. As we move into 2014, work will include going back to landowners to finalize a route. When this is completed the design phase of the project can take place.

### **Mill Basement**

The project has not moved much in the past year. Still discussing logistics of removing and hauling away the silt.

### **Cooperage and Icehouse Roofs**

The temporary coverings on the roofs of the Ice House and the Cooperage so far have held up well. The windows on the south side of the cooperage have been installed this year.

### **Electric in the Mill**

An estimate has been put together by deNeui for the electrical into building \$3,311 to excavate, bore, and wire to 4<sup>th</sup> floor. deNeui said the fixtures are not compatible as is because they require 270. Discussed mason jar fixtures for inexpensive rustic look. No other action has taken place.

### **Donations**

The Foundation has received the donation of a wooden millstone crane that reportedly came from Motor Mill. Little else is known about the item. Lee Lenth will try to rebuild the millstone crane, which apparently had been modified from its original size.

Jeanette Muller has donated a wooden auger that she acquired at the Villa Louis Rendezvous in Prairie du Chien. Lenth has hung the auger for display in the Mill.

## **GROUNDS**

### **Robert Grau Memorial Savanna**

An Eagle Scout candidate has proposed a project to lengthen the trail on the Grau Savanna. The work started in 2013 but was not finished.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Website**

The Motor Mill Website located at [motormill.org](http://motormill.org) has been kept up by Volunteer Webmaster Joleen Jansen. In 2011 and 2012 the website went through some updating. The updates have helped visitors find information easier. This is a great way to keep information in front of interested visitors. In 2013 the website had 5,011 Unique Visits, 10,648 Page Views, 4,598 First Time Visits and 413 Returning Visits. Website statistics for **2012**-no data **2011** are 1,734 unique visitors, **2010** - 1,449 unique visitors **2009** -1,568 unique visitors. **2008**-1,658 unique visitors, **2007**-1,202 unique visitors **2006**-507 unique visitors

The board discussed ways to display original Motor Mill artworks on the website. Promotion of the art and artist could bring widespread publicity to Motor. Joleen Jansen will place photos on the website when the board decides how they should be displayed.

It was also discussed using Facebook, press releases, and the website to request digital images to feature the Mill on the website. "People are interested in these local pieces of art".

### **Facebook**

Conservation Board staff Abbey Harkrader and Tammie Kraus continue to use and update the Motor Mill Facebook page. At the end of 2013 the site had 546 Friends. The site is used to showcase upcoming events, and post comments and pictures. Several visitors have posted their own pictures on the page as well.

### **Newsletter**

The Motor Mill Newsletter *Milling Around* only had one edition this year for the summer of 2013. There are 153 newsletters sent by mail and 195 sent by e-mail for a total of 348. The newsletter is also posted on the Motor Mill website and on [www.claytoncountyconservation.org](http://www.claytoncountyconservation.org). Copies are also available in the Welcome Center and the Mill.

### **Parades and Booths**

Members of the Motor Mill Foundation were involved in several parades and events including the Clayton County Fair, Plagman's Barn and Heritage Days. The theme was the Iowa Travel Guide image of Motor Mill. The events gave members a good opportunity to discuss the bridge project, upcoming projects and promote up-coming open weekends to the public.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Reference Library**

Collins suggested the Foundation needs a library of reference materials. Nikolai has been in touch with a firm that will search for titles recommended by Dave Metz. Tom Gifford offered to donate a small bookcase to store reference books. A suitable place will be located at Osborne for the library.

Nikolai provided us a book list from Metz of recommended reading. He suggested that we have the books at Osborne in our library for reference and study. Many of them are available on Amazon. Nikolai and Lenth are impressed with #9 "Iowa Public Land Disposal" 1942 to learn about early Iowa settlement.

Stone brought a book, "Old Mills of the Midwest," which was donated to the Motor Mill Foundation by Bernie Runkel, the widow of naturalist Sylvan Runkel.

### **Historical Research**

The Motor Mill Foundation hosted a Motor Mill Memories day at Motor Mill on June 11 starting at 12:00 noon with a light lunch. About 28 people attended the event. The people who attended seemed to enjoy sharing their stories.

Topics of discussion included Betty Johnson confirmed that lumber from the mill had been removed prior to 1900 for use in other buildings around the farmstead. There was also considerable discussion about the location of the artesian well that once flowed through the Inn.

Joleen Jansen has made 3 copies of a DVD of the event. The DVDs will be circulated for board members to review.

Betty (Klink) Johnson has donated a number of items to the foundation, including the original, framed certificate from the National Register of Historic Places.

Betty Buchholz found several Clayton County Register articles about the Motor Mill School and a number of documents from the Garnavillo Museum relating to Motor Mill.

Buchholz has been in touch with an individual whose great grandfather may have worked for John Thompson and has talked to a person whose great uncle may have been a cooper at Motor. She has also found 1910 newspaper references ...'Klink farm up for sale for future power dam'.

Buchholz noted that some of the occasional confusion about John Thompson might be because there were at least 17 people named John Thompson in Clayton County between 1850 and 1900.

Collins has found a list of mills that were located in Clayton County.

Nadine West, former curator at Montauk, has access to a collection of letters between Governor Larrabee and James Crosby, who were good friends. Buchholz, Nikolai, Lenth, and Collins visited Montauk to look at correspondence between Governor Larrabee and John Thompson, but there were disappointed to find very little pertaining to Motor.

Nikolai invited Dave Metz, from the Pine Creek Mill, to come on September 4 to tour Motor and give us his interpretation of what machinery might have been used in the Mill. Metz has offered to do a floor plan sketch of what happened on each floor of the mill if we send him the As-built Drawings CD. Metz is researching what the grinder that we salvaged from Potter's Mill really is.

Collins reported on her trip to Pickwick Mill in southeastern Minnesota. She noted that the mill machinery will be operating September 14-15. The board discussed a field trip to the site, and to Dell's Mill, near Augusta, Wis., on that weekend.



## **Tours**

The Mill was open for tours two weekends a month May through September representing 9 open weekends and several special tours. There were 1,492 registered visitors to the mill this year representing visitors from 22 states. Open times are Saturday and Sunday from 12:00 to 5:00 PM both days.

The notebooks of photos and other reference materials that are on display at Motor Mill were updated. A notebook of photos chronicling the bridge construction was prepared for this year.

The Holiday Walk was held at Motor Mill this year on Thursday November 14. The theme was "Over the River and Through the Woods." The event started at 6 p.m., with volunteers giving brief presentations at the Stable, the Inn, the Ice House, the Cooperage, and outside the Mill. After completing the walk, visitors were able to go into the mill for refreshments. Sandy and Dean Refle installed lights on the bridge again. The event drew 67 people in attendance and was deemed a success.

## **Motor Mill Presentations**

Tim Engelhardt and Lora Friest featured Motor Mill in a program on public-private partnerships at the Iowa Association of County Conservation Board's Winterfest workshop Jan. 22-24.

Nikolai spoke to the Clayton County Genealogical Society on Feb. 26.

Larry Stone and Marlys Svendsen presented to the State Historical Society in Iowa City on April 10. The video of the program is on the Motor Mill website.

Nikolai presented to the St. Joseph Catholic Church Ladies Guild on April 29.

Citizens State Bank in Strawberry Point offered to give the Motor Mill Foundation display space for the month of July. The board discussed including these items in the display: poster of the Iowa Travel Guide image, Iowa Travel Guides and MMF brochures, the P. B. Moss print, a schedule of open house dates, the two Silos and Smokestacks awards, a sign with the Facebook and website address.

Engelhardt and deNeui submitted answers to email questions from Jason Smith, with Bridgehunter's Chronicles website. The Bridhehunters also will host a Historic Bridge Weekend Conference in eastern Iowa August 9-12, with a stop planned at Motor. There may be an opportunity to give tours to the group, and perhaps to make a presentation about Motor Mill.

Nikolai has contacted the editors of the Guttenberg and Elkader newspapers to determine if they'd be willing to print regular "Stores in Stone" columns about Motor Mill. Jean Marie Hall and Larry Stone are working something up for a sample column.

## **Motor Mill Gala**

The Motor Mill Gala was held Saturday May 4 from 11:00 am to 2 pm. Several partner organizations set up booths and educational displays for the public. The Elkader Lions Club had a lunch plate available for sale.

A formal presentation was made to thank the partner organizations involved in the bridge reconstruction project. Some of the speakers included Mark Ackelson, INHF, Don Menken, former director of the conservation board, the Klink/Johnson family, Candy Streed, Silos and Smokestacks Linda Lucy representing Tom Harken, Iowa Representatives Patti Ruff and Roger Thomas, Lora Friest, RC&D Jessica Rilling, photographer, Robin Bostrom TRRC, John Nikolai, MMF and Jim Langhus CCCB.

Other happenings for the day included a slide program by Marlys Svendsen on the Motor Mill Historic Site. Larry Stone had prepared a slide program on the bridge construction. The “turkey dash” was last event held. Participants donated \$5 to receive a rubber turkey to float in the river. Proceeds from the race went to the Turkey River Recreational Corridor.

The Gala was deemed a success, with about 250 people attending. The weather cooperated, with the rain holding off until after the event. There was some media coverage, such as on KWWL-TV. The Klink family held an informal reunion in conjunction with the Gala, and more than 30 people participated.

## **FINANCE**

### **Donor Recognition**

John Nikolai has continued to write thank-you letters to donors as they come in. The donor recognition boards are up and are being updated regularly.

### **Stories in Stone Capital Fund Campaign**

While reviewing donations, it has been noted that a number of donors are from out of the county. The board brainstormed ideas for getting more participation from Clayton County residents. Some suggestions have been made, but the board has taken no additional action.

Merchandise sales have netted at most a few hundred dollars annually. The Foundation will continue to offer merchandise, but should not consider the sales to be significant source of income.

The campaign has raised approximately \$40,000 so far. We need approximately \$70,000 more. The Foundation has discussed a 3-year repayment plan, which would require approval by the Conservation Board. This would allow the Motor Mill Foundation to budget for restoration work and other expenses before paying off the entire bridge debt. At the close of the year, details for the plan have not been worked out.

The Foundation has discussed whether to attempt to use PayPal to accept donations and sell merchandise on the website. There were questions about the viability of this method of raising funds, and the implications for a 501(c) 3 organization. The board took no action.

The Foundation also discussed instituting an admission fee. Further research into the fee will be looked at in the upcoming year.